NEWS RELEASE
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

BLS

Virginia Beach Area Employment — December 2019
Local Rate of Employment Growth Below the National Average

Total nonfarm employment for the Virginia Beach Metropolitan Statistical Area stood at 797,400 in December 2019, up 1.1 percent over the year, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. During the same period, the national job count increased 1.4 percent. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the December increase was the ninth consecutive month of over-the-year job increases in the Virginia Beach metropolitan area. (See chart 1 and table 1. The Technical Note at the end of this release contains the metropolitan area definition. All data in this release are not seasonally adjusted; accordingly, over-the-year analysis is used throughout.)

Chart 1. Total nonfarm employment, over-the-year percent change in the United States and Virginia Beach metropolitan area, June 2014–June 2019
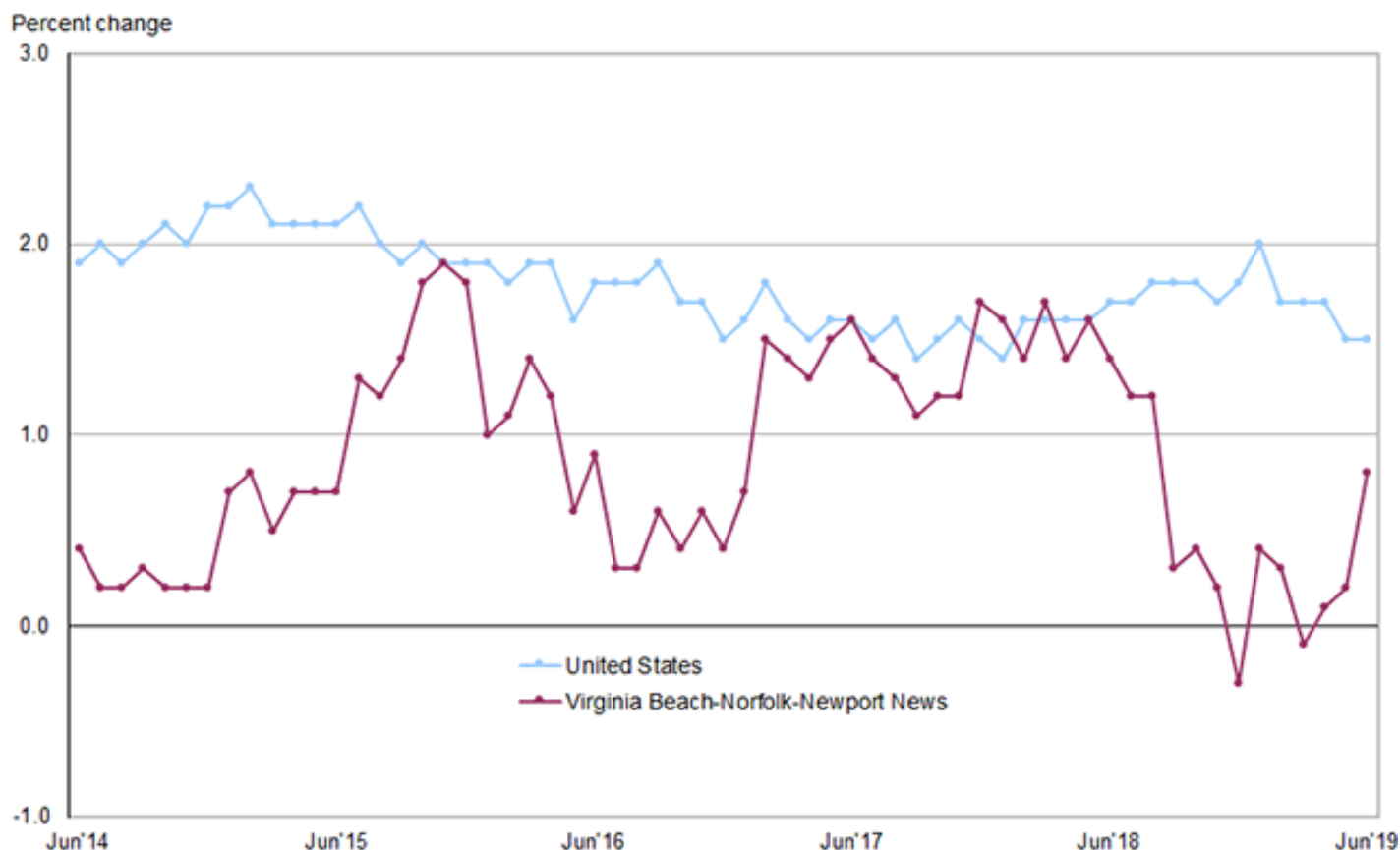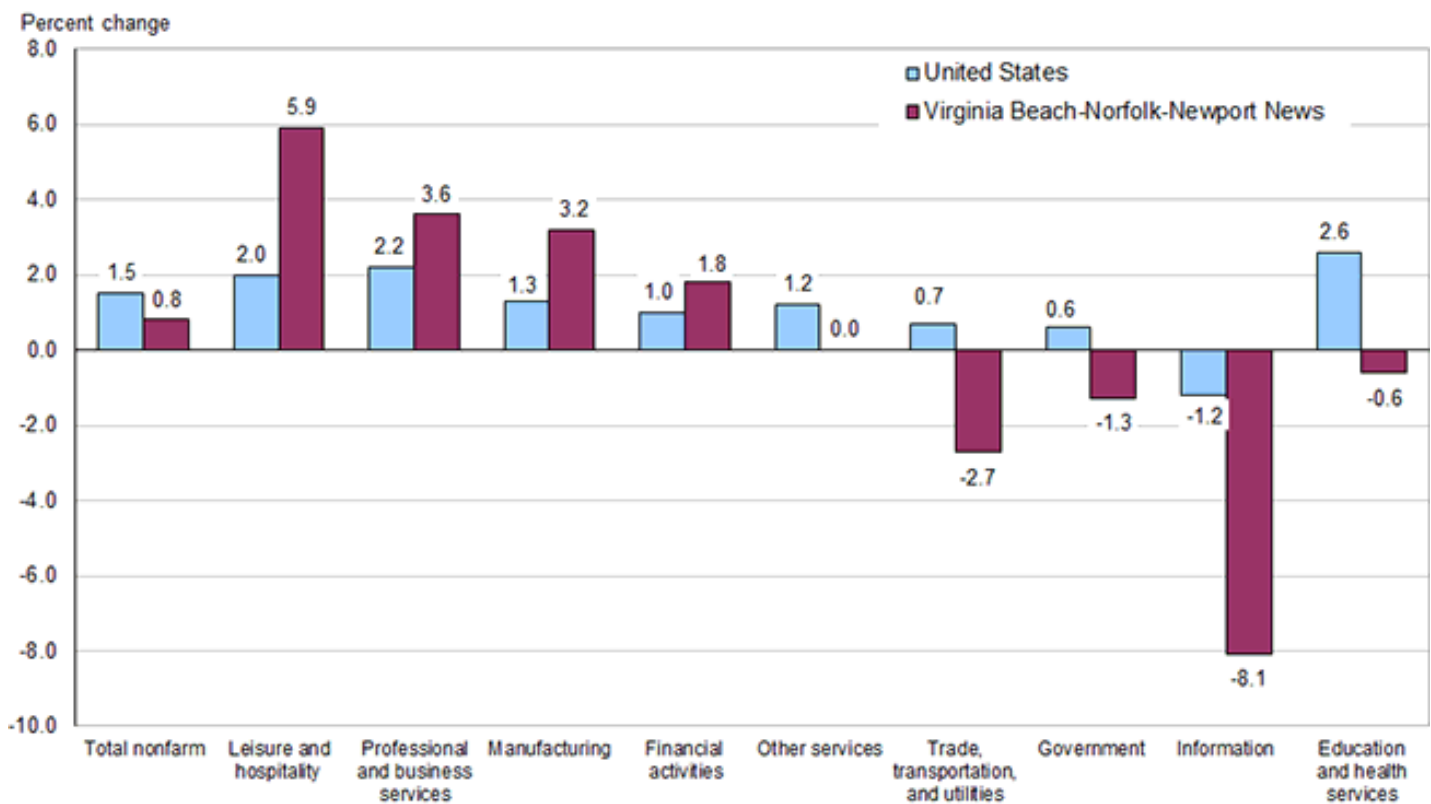

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In the Virginia Beach metropolitan area, leisure and hospitality had the largest employment increase from December 2018 to December 2019, adding 4,600 jobs. The local rate of job growth in leisure and hospitality was 5.2 percent, more than double this industry's national rate increase of 2.5 percent.

Virginia Beach's education and health services supersector had the second largest increase over the year, adding 1,900 jobs. The local rate of job growth in the supersector was 1.7 percent, slower than the national rate of 2.7 percent.

Two other supersectors had job increases equal to or greater than 1,000 over the year. Manufacturing added 1,300 jobs, and financial activities added 1,000 jobs. The local rate of job growth in manufacturing was 2.2 percent, five-and-a-half times faster than the 0.4-percent gain nationally. Virginia Beach's job growth in financial activities (2.6 percent) was also faster than that for the nation (1.4 percent). (See chart 2.)

Chart 2. Total nonfarm selected industry supersector employment, over-the-year percent change, United States and the Virginia Beach metropolitan area, June 2019

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In the Virginia Beach area, two supersectors lost more than 1,000 jobs from December 2018 to December 2019: government (-3,500) and trade, transportation, and utilities (-1,300). While the local rate of job loss within government was 2.2 percent, employment for the U.S. grew 0.7 percent. Locally, employment in trade, transportation, and utilities declined by 1.0 percent since December 2018, while nationally it increased 0.5 percent over the year.

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Metropolitan area employment data for January 2020 are scheduled to be released on Monday, March 16, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. (EDT).

Technical Note

This release presents nonfarm payroll employment estimates from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program. The CES survey is a Federal-State cooperative endeavor between State employment security agencies and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Definitions. Employment data refer to persons on establishment payrolls who receive pay for any part of the pay period which includes the 12th of the month. Persons are counted at their place of work rather than at their place of residence; those appearing on more than one payroll are counted on each payroll. Industries are classified on the basis of their principal activity in accordance with the 2017 version of the North American Industry Classification System.

Method of estimation. CES State and Area employment data are produced using several estimation procedures. Where possible these data are produced using a "weighted link relative" estimation technique in which a ratio of current-month weighted employment to that of the previous-month weighted employment is computed from a sample of establishments reporting for both months. The estimates of employment for the current month are then obtained by multiplying these ratios by the previous month's employment estimates. The weighted link relative technique is utilized for data series where the sample size meets certain statistical criteria.

For some employment series, the sample of establishments is very small or highly variable. In these cases, a model-based approach is used in estimation. These models use the direct sample estimates (described above), combined with forecasts of historical (benchmarked) data to decrease volatility in estimation. Two different models (Fay-Herriot Model and Small Domain Model) are used depending on the industry level being estimated. For more detailed information about each model, refer to the BLS Handbook of Methods.

Annual revisions. Employment estimates are adjusted annually to a complete count of jobs, called benchmarks, derived principally from tax reports which are submitted by employers who are covered under state unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The benchmark information is used to adjust the monthly estimates between the new benchmark and the preceding one and also to establish the level of employment for the new benchmark month. Thus, the benchmarking process establishes the level of employment, and the sample is used to measure the month-to-month changes in the level for the subsequent months.

Reliability of the estimates. The estimates presented in this release are based on sample surveys, administrative data, and modeling and, thus, are subject to sampling and other types of errors. Sampling error is a measure of sampling variability—that is, variation that occurs by chance because a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed. Survey data are also subject to nonsampling errors, such as those which can be introduced into the data collection and processing operations. Estimates not directly derived from sample surveys are subject to additional errors resulting from the special estimation processes used. The sums of individual items may not always equal the totals shown in the same tables because of rounding.

Employment estimates. Measures of sampling error for the total nonfarm employment series are available for metropolitan areas and metropolitan divisions at www.bls.gov/sae/additional-resources/reliability-of-state-and-area-estimates.htm. Measures of sampling error for more detailed series at the area and division level are available upon request. Measures of sampling error for states down to the supersector level are available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/sae/additional-resources/reliability-of-state-and-area-estimates.htm. Information on recent benchmark revisions is available online at www.bls.gov/sae/publications/benchmark-article/annual-benchmark-article.pdf.

Area definitions. The substate area data published in this release reflect the delineations issued by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, dated April 10, 2018. A detailed list of the geographic definitions is available at www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm.

The **Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, Mathews, Surry, and York Counties and Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg cities in Virginia and Currituck County in North Carolina.

Additional information

More complete information on the technical procedures used to develop these estimates and additional data appear in *Employment and Earnings*, which is available online at www.bls.gov/opub/ee/home.htm. Detailed industry employment data for metropolitan areas from the CES program are available from the State and Area Employment databases at www.bls.gov/sae/data/home.htm.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employees on nonfarm payrolls by industry supersector, United States and the Virginia Beach Metropolitan Statistical Area, not seasonally adjusted (in thousands)

Area	Back data	Dec 2018	Oct 2019	Nov 2019	Dec 2019	Dec 2018 to Dec 2019	
						Net change	Percent change
United States							
Total nonfarm...	〽	151,203	153,001	(p)153,620	(p)153,342	(p)2,139	(p)1.4
Mining and logging	〽	753	759	(p)745	(p)731	(p)-22	(p)-2.9
Construction	〽	7,313	7,713	(p)7,603	(p)7,456	(p)143	(p)2.0
Manufacturing..	〽	12,815	12,820	(p)12,869	(p)12,865	(p)50	(p)0.4
Trade, transportation, and utilities	〽	28,512	27,918	(p)28,486	(p)28,660	(p)148	(p)0.5
Information	〽	2,839	2,836	(p)2,864	(p)2,857	(p)18	(p)0.6
Financial activities	〽	8,622	8,732	(p)8,729	(p)8,744	(p)122	(p)1.4
Professional and business services	〽	21,345	21,815	(p)21,877	(p)21,745	(p)400	(p)1.9
Education and health services	〽	24,092	24,654	(p)24,785	(p)24,737	(p)645	(p)2.7
Leisure and hospitality................................	〽	16,213	16,804	(p)16,592	(p)16,614	(p)401	(p)2.5
Other services	〽	5,859	5,944	(p)5,943	(p)5,935	(p)76	(p)1.3
Government..	〽	22,840	23,006	(p)23,127	(p)22,998	(p)158	(p)0.7
Virginia Beach Metropolitan Statistical Area							
Total nonfarm...	〽	789.1	794.3	796.9	(p)797.4	(p)8.3	(p)1.1
Mining, logging, and construction..............	〽	38.0	42.5	42.3	(p)42.4	(p)4.4	(p)11.6
Manufacturing..	〽	57.9	58.8	59.1	(p)59.2	(p)1.3	(p)2.2
Trade, transportation, and utilities	〽	132.5	128.4	130.5	(p)131.2	(p)-1.3	(p)-1.0
Information	〽	10.3	10.2	10.2	(p)10.2	(p)-0.1	(p)-1.0
Financial activities	〽	38.6	39.6	39.8	(p)39.6	(p)1.0	(p)2.6
Professional and business services	〽	113.1	112.9	112.9	(p)112.8	(p)-0.3	(p)-0.3
Education and health services	〽	113.2	115.4	115.1	(p)115.1	(p)1.9	(p)1.7
Leisure and hospitality................................	〽	89.0	94.9	92.1	(p)93.6	(p)4.6	(p)5.2
Other services	〽	35.5	36.0	35.9	(p)35.8	(p)0.3	(p)0.8
Government..	〽	161.0	155.6	159.0	(p)157.5	(p)-3.5	(p)-2.2

Footnotes
 (p) Preliminary
SOURCE: Current Employment Statistics - NationalState and Metropolitan Area